

Message

From: Zartarian, Valerie [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=81096FE8DD024BDF935DEC292BF44F9D-ZARTARIAN, VALERIE]
Sent: 4/24/2018 11:50:34 AM
To: Orme-Zavaleta, Jennifer [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=3c5a111dc377411595e5b24b5d96146b-Orme-Zavaleta, Jennifer]; Rodan, Bruce [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=Rodan, Bruce]; Watkins, Tim [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=4cbd1c572f584fd7b0a3b5945f118558-Watkins, Tim]; Guiseppi-Elie, Annette [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=63d3e2eae9c4acba2609baa90b0f735-Guiseppi-El]; Garland, Jay [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=8344688361ec4461b89037afbf43f5aa-Garland, Jay]; Hauchman, Fred [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=f8bf9785f32048ccad5f60b25a72017d-Hauchman, Fred]
Subject: Fwd: Inside EPA: Agencies Wrestle With Lead Exposure Goals Ahead Of Strategy's Release

FYI

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Firestone, Michael" <Firestone.Michael@epa.gov>
Date: April 24, 2018 at 7:42:24 AM EDT
To: "Brown, Stephanie" <Brown.Stephanie@epa.gov>, "Christ, Lisa" <Christ.Lisa@epa.gov>, "Bandemehr, Angela" <Bandemehr.Angela@epa.gov>, "Hauff, Amanda" <Hauff.Amanda@epa.gov>, "Leonard, Darlene" <Leonard.Darlene@epa.gov>, "Lee, Charles" <Lee.Charles@epa.gov>, "Lung, Tai" <Lung.Tai@epa.gov>, "Foster, Stiven" <Foster.Stiven@epa.gov>, "Zartarian, Valerie" <Zartarian.Valerie@epa.gov>, "Ellenbogen, Victoria" <Ellenbogen.Victoria@epa.gov>, "Suero, Maryann" <suero.maryann@epa.gov>, "Fonseca, Silvina" <Fonseca.Silvina@epa.gov>, "Block, Molly" <block.molly@epa.gov>, "Brennan, Thomas" <Brennan.Thomas@epa.gov>, "Vizard, Elizabeth" <Vizard.Elizabeth@epa.gov>
Subject: Inside EPA: Agencies Wrestle With Lead Exposure Goals Ahead Of Strategy's Release

FYI from InsideEPA (<https://insideepa.com/daily-news/agencies-wrestle-lead-exposure-goals-ahead-strategys-release>)

Agencies Wrestle With Lead Exposure Goals Ahead Of Strategy's Release

April 23, 2018

Two months before the planned release of a federal strategy for reducing children's lead exposures, EPA and other agencies are wrestling with key policy goals, including a planned schedule for eliminating exposures, whether the strategy will complement pending EPA rules and if EPA plans to account for stricter federal health standards that are slated to be adopted later this year.

EPA officials April 20 told a Children's Health Protection Advisory Committee (CHPAC) meeting in Washington, D.C., that federal agencies will soon seek White House Office of Management & Budget approval of a "Federal Strategy to Reduce Childhood Lead Exposures and Associated Health Impacts" that they hope to release in late June.

But Ruth Etzel, director of EPA's Office of Children's Health Protection, told CHPAC that while the new strategy will call for eliminating children's exposures to lead, federal agencies collaborating on the document are still wrestling with a time frame to set for achieving that objective.

"We definitely have the word 'eradicate' [exposures] in the vision" statement, Etzel said. "The question is how long will it take us to do that and what can we commit to in the next five years."

In addition, EPA's National Lead Coordinator Hayley Hughes was unable to answer an advisor's question on how the new interagency lead strategy would address two pending EPA rules to limit exposures to lead based paint and drinking water. Hughes said she was in her first week on the job and would reply later.

Such responses prompted concern from CHPAC members, who were seeking answers as they worked to strengthen March 2017 advice to Administrator Scott Pruitt on how to eliminate lead exposures.

Among other things, they had urged Pruitt to tighten standards for lead-based paint hazards, including in dust and soil, and to overhaul its lead and copper rule to reduce lead in drinking water as EPA's National Drinking Water Advisory Council called for in 2015.

But CHPAC advisors said during the meeting that while Pruitt's May 2017 response said that the new federal strategy for reducing children's exposure to lead "will broadly address your recommendations to protect children from health risks posed by lead," the agency's efforts so far appear mixed.

Tom Neltner, a CHPAC panelist who works for the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), noted that EPA had initially refused to commit to a deadline for updating its hazard standards for lead-based paint in residential buildings until a federal court intervened.

He also noted that Pruitt, in a recent op-ed in the Washington Times on infrastructure priorities, declined to call for reducing lead in housing, schools and childcare facilities as CHPAC had previously recommended.

After noting during the first day of the April 19-20 CHPAC meeting that Pruitt's response said the strategy would address CHPAC recommendations, Neltner asked staff how the forthcoming strategy would incorporate updates to the lead paint hazard standards and lead and copper rules.

Although officials were unable to answer the question, Hughes promised to provide a future response.

CDC Standards

On the sidelines of the meeting, Hughes also referred to the agency's press office a question from Inside EPA on how agency officials expect the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) plan to tighten its reference level for lead in blood -- the level at which CDC recommends public health actions be initiated to protect children from harmful exposures -- from 5 micrograms per cubic meter (ug/m3) to 3.5 ug/m3 may affect the agency's lead reduction efforts.

EPA press officials did not provide an answer by press time.

Pruitt and other administration officials have called reducing children's lead exposures a significant priority.

Pruitt co-chaired a Feb. 15 cabinet-level meeting on collaborating on the federal strategy to lower childhood lead exposures. The effort continues a presidential task force first formed under the Clinton administration on tackling environmental health and safety risks to children. The task force in 2000

issued a first-time national strategy to address childhood lead exposure by focusing mainly on lead paint hazards.

The administration has taken steps to solicit public input on its strategy. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) sought comment for 30 days through Nov. 24 to inform the new strategy.

In an Oct. 24 notice in the Federal Register, HUD said the strategy would seek to ensure “children live, learn and play free from the harmful effects of lead exposure” and includes goals of reducing exposures, identifying and treating exposed children and supporting research on the effects of exposure, among others.

When panelists asked if they could provide input on the strategy, Etzel noted that public input had already been sought on the strategy document but suggested there would be additional opportunities to inform agencies broader lead reduction efforts. She also said agencies received more than 700 comments and are working to incorporate that input into the latest draft.

But environmentalists, including EDF, have questioned whether Pruitt's so-called "war on lead" is more talk than action, noting that the push for an updated strategy comes as the Trump administration is pushing a fiscal year 2019 budget request that seeks to significantly reduce EPA's work on lead.

EDF has argued that Pruitt's actions on lead "must be ambitious, practical, well-funded, and legally sustainable," and cautioning that "Words, meetings, white papers, and photo ops aren't enough."

Mixed Record

During the CHPAC meeting Hughes reiterated that EPA and other federal agencies have made reducing childhood lead exposures a priority. She noted that on April 4, Pruitt made available \$5.5 billion in loans through the agency's Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act program that supports state efforts to reduce lead in drinking water.

Hughes said that in her new role she is responsible for coordinating between EPA headquarters and regional efforts on lead reduction efforts, as well as with states, tribes, municipalities and others.

But Neltner gave EPA a mixed report on its efforts in response to CHPAC's 2017 recommendations for reducing lead exposures.

Neltner noted that EPA declined to commit to a rule updating its lead hazard standards until the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit Dec. 28 ruled that the agency had unreasonably delayed updating its lead standards after accepting a 2009 rulemaking petition, and required the agency to take action.

As a result of the case, *A Community Voice, et al. v EPA*, the agency is expected to issue a proposed rule in June on standards for lead in dust and paint. Neltner reiterated his concerns that while the agency is moving toward updating its standard for lead in dust, it's unclear whether they agency will be able to propose by June a new definition of how much lead paint may contain.

He also told the meeting that EPA appears to be lagging on other CHPAC recommendations included in the March 2017 letter, including a call for a standard for lead in soil.

CHPAC members expressed interest in reiterating past recommendations on reducing lead exposures in public comments in forthcoming rulemaking dockets, such as proposals expected this summer to update the lead-based hazard standards and lead and copper rule.

But federal rules preclude the panel from providing unsolicited input to the agency. Given the restriction, CHPAC Chairwoman Barbara Morrissey said individual panelists may choose to write comments to the agency, but the advisory panel will not provide comments unless it receives a request from EPA. -- Dave Reynolds (dreynolds@iwpnews.com)

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